## **CLAIMS**

## What is claimed is:

1. A method of block box testing in a multi-tier application environment comprising:

dividing a multi-tier application into a plurality of tier-specific modules; and

testing each of said plurality of tier-specific modules as a black box.

- 2. The method of Claim 1 wherein an output from a first tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules is used as input to a subsequent tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules.
- 3. The method of Claim 2 wherein said output is stored in a computer usable media prior to use as said input.
- 4. The method of Claim 2 wherein said output is stored, prior to said use as said input, for a period of time substantially greater than a time that said output is stored during use of said multi-tier application.
  - 5. The method of Claim 2 further comprising:

    automatically comparing an output of said first tier-specific module to
    an input specification of said subsequent tier-specific module;

continuing said testing if said output meets said input specification;

halting said testing if said output does not meet said input specification.

- 6. The method of Claim 1 wherein at least one of said plurality of tierspecific modules is tested prior to availability of a preceding tier-specific module.
- 7. The method of Claim 6 wherein simulated input is used to test said at least one of said plurality of tier-specific modules.
- 8. The method of Claim 1 further comprising performing an end-to-end black box test on said multi-tier application.
- 9. The method of Claim 1 wherein said multi-tier application environment comprises a utility data center.
- 10. The method of Claim 1 wherein each of said plurality of tier-specific modules executes within a single tier of said multi-tier application environment.
- 11. A computer readable media comprising computer usable instructions that when executed on a computer system implement a method of block box testing in a multi-tier application environment, said method comprising:

accessing a plurality of tier-specific modules that comprise a multi-tier application; and

testing each of said plurality of tier-specific modules as a black box.

- 12. The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein an output from a first tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules is used as input to a subsequent tier-specific module of said plurality of tier-specific modules.
- 13. The computer readable media of Claim 12 wherein said output is stored in a computer usable media prior to use as said input.
- 14. The computer readable media of Claim 12 wherein said output is stored, prior to said use as said input, for a period of time substantially greater than a time that said output is stored during use of said multi-tier application.
  - 15. The computer readable media of Claim 12 further comprising:

    automatically comparing an output of said first tier-specific module to
    an input specification of said subsequent tier-specific module;

continuing said testing if said output meets said input specification; and

halting said testing if said output does not meet said input specification.

16. The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein at least one of said plurality of tier-specific modules is tested prior to availability of a preceding tier-specific module.

- 17. The computer readable media of Claim 16 wherein simulated input is used to test said at least one of said plurality of tier-specific modules.
- 18. The computer readable media of Claim 11 further comprising performing an end-to-end black box test on said multi-tier application.
- 19. The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein said multi-tier application environment comprises a utility data center.
- 20. The computer readable media of Claim 11 wherein each of said plurality of tier-specific modules executes within a single tier of said multi-tier application environment.
- 21. A computer usable media comprising test output from a tier-specific module, wherein said tier-specific module performs a portion of a multi-tier application.